



MVCSD

9/11 DAY OF SERVICE & REMEMBRANCE

★ 25th ANNIVERSARY ★

REMEMBER ★ HONOR ★ SERVE

MOUNT VERNON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026



HONORING HISTORY THROUGH UNITY

Mount Vernon City School District Reflects on 25th Anniversary 9/11 Remembrance Project

Twenty-five years after the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the Mount Vernon City School District (MVCSD) community gathered around school grounds to commemorate the lives lost, honor first responders, and instill enduring values of service and unity in a new generation. Centered on a flagpole beautification flower-planting project and a solemn remembrance ceremony, the initiative brought together educators, administrators, students, and community members. Participants in the 25th Anniversary 9/11 Remembrance Project revealed that the events were deeply meaningful, highlighting the profound personal and collective impact of the commemoration.

A Shared Commitment to Remembrance and Service

Spearheaded by the MVCSD Volunteer Program, the project transformed the space surrounding the flagpole into a vibrant symbol of resilience and growth. Staff, students, and community members got hands-on with planting, while others attended ceremonies at schools around the Mount Vernon City School District.

A standout highlight of the project was the active leadership and eagerness shown by district students. Young volunteers worked side by side with faculty to plant flowers around the flagpole, bringing vibrant life and honor to the memorial site.



Redefining Heroes for the Youth

A recurring theme across the district was the powerful educational lesson the event delivered to Mount Vernon students. Staff noted that the project helped students realize that heroes are not defined by super abilities, but by ordinary people doing extraordinary things for others.

By engaging in physical service and observing moments of reflection, students learned the significance of civic duty, kindness, and community support. The project demonstrated that honoring history goes beyond textbooks—it lives in active participation and community care.





Students and Staff Commemorate 25th Anniversary of 9/11 with Flower-Planting

The entire Mount Vernon City School District came together to remember the victims of 9/11 today, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the tragic terrorist attacks. The school district received funding through the 9/11 Day AmeriCorps grant, using it to plant flowers and beautify the flag poles at all buildings.

The project was inspired by a photo from 9/11, where firefighters raised an American flag out of the ash, showing resilience and unity. Flowers were planted by volunteers and students, who discussed the significance of 9/11 as they planted.

"Students reflected on the significance of 9/11 and learned about plant care before getting their hands in the dirt," said Lincoln Principal Kristin Cipriano. "A special thank you to our student volunteers who have offered to water the plants during recess."

At schools throughout the district, students had lessons about 9/11, learning about the victims and why it is so important to remember them and the bravery of the first responders and citizens.

"I learned about the man in the red bandana," said Jesslyna Hernandez, a sixth-grade student at Grimes School. "He did a good deed for everybody, but the story itself is sad. I think it's important to remember because thousands of lives were lost."

On the day of 9/11, all schools and the district office took time to reflect on 9/11 with remembrance ceremonies and lessons about 9/11. At Grimes, students came out to plant their flowers in the morning, performing their act of service shortly after the time of the attacks.

"I feel like it's really sad because the planes crashed into the towers and people were at work and didn't know what was going on," said Grimes sixth-grade student Abdourahamane Kaba. "It's important to remember because we don't know what they could have done with their lives, and they had families at home waiting for them."

Students mixed multiple subjects through this project by reading, writing and planting in remembrance of 9/11.

"Students in fifth grade merged Social Studies, ELA, and Science together by gardening," said Dennis Richmond, teacher at Graham. "Here at Graham School, students were extremely excited to be learning outside of the classroom. They made sure that every plant was placed in the ground in a special new home. Not only did students watch an emotional video about September 11, 2001, they wrote moving pieces of writing, and they worked on posters."



MVCSD 9/11
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At the district office, Superintendent Dr. Demario Strickland joined in on the planting on Thursday, before bringing the entire office together outside the flagpole for reflections and remembrance on Friday morning. Sheila Solomon, data processing supervisor for the district, led the volunteer efforts and expressed the importance of uniting ahead of the day. Over 200+ volunteers throughout the school district supported the flower-planting.

"Together, our students, staff, families, and community members can truly make a difference as we remember, honor and serve together to make a brighter tomorrow," said Ms. Solomon.



**14
BUILDINGS**

planted flowers around flagpoles and held ceremonies in the MVCSD

**200+
VOLUNTEERS**

helped plant the flowers around flagpoles.



Upcoming Opportunities to Volunteer

Here is a detailed look at our upcoming schedule. We invite you to join us. Watch for additional details.

**OCT
3**

Community Playground Build
Doles Recreation Center
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

**OCT
3**

Mobil Food Pantry
Parker School
9:30 AM

**OCT
8**

SEPTA Ice Cream Social
Benjamin Turner Academy
3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

**OCT
21**

Mobil Food Pantry
Parker School
12:30 PM

Please feel free to contact us if you need Volunteers to assist with future projects.



The MVCSD Volunteer Program is a district-wide initiative that gives individuals the opportunity to support school and community events, participate in district-wide service days, and strengthen connections with colleagues, students, and families.

WHY SHOULD I VOLUNTEER?

Volunteering offers several benefits, including:

- Boosting morale by building teamwork and school spirit
- Making a meaningful impact on staff, students, families, and the community
- Developing leadership and service opportunities outside of daily responsibilities
- Helping to showcase the Board of Education's commitment to service and community engagement

WHAT TYPES OF VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

Staff may volunteer at:

- School-based events (literacy nights, food drives, student showcases, athletic events, career days, etc.)
- District initiatives (mentoring programs, tutoring, community outreach)
- District-wide Volunteer Days (one in Fall/Winter, one in Spring/Summer)

Join other "jewels" in the MVCSD Jewel Box by shining the light on the compassion in our District by volunteering.

[Click Here to Register](#)



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MOUNT VERNON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT PROJECT TEAM

Grant Writer

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Lisa Autieri
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Carolyn Gerstle
Communication Consultant

Jordan Solis
Communication Consultant

Hillary Flemming
Budget Analyst

Jeanine Fertil
PTA

Support

MVCSD 200+ Registered Volunteers
MVCSD Students
MVCSD Staff
MVCSD Parents
MV Community

LET US NEVER FORGET

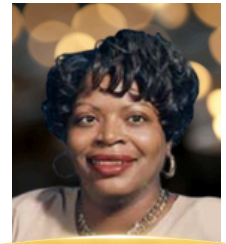
Our Mount Vernon Citizens who perished September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center.



Michael A. Boccardi



Johnathan Eric Briley



Sandra Patricia Campbell



Kathie Marie McCloskey



Rochelle Monique Snell

Thank you MVCSD for showing up and showing out!

Friday, September 11, 2026 marked 25 years since the 9/11 attacks. Thousands of people lost their lives that day and many more years to follow. So many family lives were forever changed. There are more than 100 million Americans that either was born after 9/11 or who were too young to hold personal memories of that day.

MVCSD was one of the proud recipients of the 9/11 Day/AmeriCorps grant for 2026. 9/11 Day was founded in 2002 by co-founders David Pane and Jay Winuk shortly after the September 11th terrorist attacks. David and Jay wanted something good to come from the loss of so many lives from that tragedy. Jay's younger brother Glenn, an attorney and volunteer firefighter, was killed while responding to the World Trade Center.

David and Jay began with a simple idea: Let's take back the day by turning the anniversary of 9/11 into a day of doing good. September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance was created by federal law in 2009. Now this day is a major moment of national reflection and public attention.

Our project was inclusive of the entire MVCSD Community - students, staff, and volunteers. Our goal was to have over 100+ volunteers participating with this project.

We were inspired by the renowned photo of the 3 firefighters raising the flag after the attacks. The photo represented fortitude, resilience and unity. We planted flowers around the flagpoles at each of the MVCSD (14) campuses in observance of the 25th Anniversary of 9/11 honoring those who lost their lives, remembering the loved ones and recognizing the courage of our first responders. All MVCSD campuses have been teaching their students about 9/11, encouraging doing good deeds and holding their own brief ceremonies, as well.

Our goal going into this project was to:

- To Teach our students that 9/11 day is a National Day of Service
- To Remember and Honor the thousands of people who died on September 11, 2001.
- To Point Out that after 9/11, people served their communities together.
- To Share that after 9/11, people forgot their differences and came together in unity.
- To Never, Never Forget.

It is our belief that we accomplished our goals AND we went far beyond Always, always remember we are stronger together...Never Forget!



AmeriCorps